

PRESS RELEASE

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KW automotive Group North America: Take-over of Belltech Sport Trucks and ST Suspension Techniques in Sanger, California

- **Belltech and Suspension Techniques brought under the umbrella of KW automotive Group (GmbH)**
- **Use of existing distribution structures**
- **Completion of product lines for North America**

KW automotive GmbH (KW) has created the perfect launching pad to supply the North American market by taking over two American chassis manufacturers. Products for existing supply programmes are produced in an area of more than 10,000 m² in Sanger, California. The company employs 50 people, who will now also stock and handle new product lines from KW. In April 2005 KW acquired 100% of all external assets of Belltech Sport Trucks and Suspension Techniques (ST). The entire supply programme—machines and installations as well as suppliers and clients—are all to be brought under the umbrella of the newly-founded KW automotive North America Inc., which will operate at the site of the companies it has taken over. The advantage of this for KW and its customers is that it will retain the experienced employees at the Sanger location. The available distribution structures can also continue to be used and expanded.

KW with Belltech in the Light Truck sector

Belltech Sport Trucks (BT) is a company that has been successfully producing suspension lowering products for light trucks and SUVs in the US for more than 17 years. BT established itself as a market leader in this segment with its so-called "Drop Spindle", which was a breakthrough product for its time. BT has a reputation for high-quality suspension lowering products for SUVs and light trucks. In recent years its products, due to their quality and exclusive distribution structures, accounted for more than 50% of all such products on the road in the US. The "Drop Spindle" is a wheel carrier whose axle ends are shifted from the middle so that the vehicle sits lower, or higher if necessary, without the need to change the axle geometry. BT has received the prestigious SEMA award four times for new, innovative products of this kind. KW automotive now also offers lowering springs and suspension parts for light trucks as well as popular leaf-sprung dead axles at the rear with accompanying dampers.

Take-over of Suspension Techniques expands product line for sports chassis systems worldwide

Another brand that KW automotive has taken over is Suspension Techniques (ST). Unlike Belltech, this company operates in the Sport Compacts market—mainly small and medium-sized cars. ST offers lowering springs and stabilizers, which are mainly manufactured at their own production plant in Sanger.

Managing Director and company founder Klaus Wohlfarth said: "By acquiring Belltech Sport Trucks and Suspension Techniques, KW can expand its product range especially for the North American market and can then offer a fully comprehensive chassis range, just like in Europe. The well-established existing distribution structures enable us to immediately supply the product range of KW and Lambo Style Doors (LSD), which are new to the US. In this way we realise our global strategy and demonstrate once again that our company is growing".

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